

AUGUST 1947

WILDLIFE Florida

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION



IN THIS ISSUE:

*Is Restocking Overrated?
Prehistoric Hangover*

FLORIDA WILDLIFE

For the
Conservation
Restoration
Protection
of Our Game and Fish



PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE
FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER
FISH COMMISSION
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA



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WILLIAM W. WEEKS
Editor

"LET GEORGE DO IT"

An age-old mistake of believing whole-heartedly in a beneficial program and then doing absolutely nothing about it is as great a sin with rod and gun as it is in any other activity of life.

The low ebb of our game and food-fish and the necessity for conserving these resources have been broadcast through every medium of public opinion. Citizens from all parts of Florida plus many of our out-of-state visiting sportsmen have agreed that someone must do something about it.

The ancient policy of "let George do it" cannot solve one of the toughest and hardest jobs on our recreation front. It will take the active cooperation of everyone who is directly or indirectly interested in the sport of field and stream.

Every hunter and fisherman wants to hunt and fish not only this year, but also next year and on into future years to come. He wants this form of healthy recreation to be handed down to his children. He knows that life's greatest thrills come to a boy when he gets his first rifle and catches his first big fish.

If, as hunters and fishermen, we can remember this and leave something for the kids of tomorrow, it will be a true step towards conservation. If we put this important theory into practice, we can depend on the game and fish to do their share towards repopulating our woods and waters.

However, the game animals and the game birds and the food fish need action instead of indifference; they need thinking instead of thoughtfulness. They cannot continue to hatch their young without some consideration from us.

If all of us practice what we preach and put into deeds what we believe, it won't be long before good hunting and good fishing will be in abundance again.

Conserving Florida's wildlife is a big undertaking; don't "let George" do it all.

THE
COVER

{ Two playful raccoons caught by the camera of a photographer of the Florida News and Photo Service.



A hand full of hatchery fry heading for a new home.

IS RESTOCKING OVERATED?

By JOHN F. DEQUINE

BACK in the late 1800's, when conservation was still just a word in the dictionary and game wardens were an unborn specie, a few avid patrons of the hook and line began to note that fishing in some of their favorite lakes and streams wasn't all it should be. The fish, it seemed, had begun to disappear to a disconcerting degree. The hardy angler who had been catching a wagon load in half a day now found that in some waters it took him all day to catch the same amount. It was a very discouraging situation. A great hue and cry was set up. Something had to be done to remedy the situation. A great many minds were put to work on the subject. Out of this mass of collective cogitation came the solution—a bright and shining piece of logic. If a stream lacked fish, the

fishermen reasoned, the obvious answer was to place some more in it.

However there was one small item spotting this otherwise neat theory. Where would they get the fish? For awhile these enterprising fish culturists followed the obvious path; they borrowed bass, trout and perch from the well-populated lakes and streams and placed them in the not-so-well-populated waters. A few strenuous experiments along these lines however, convinced them this system was not the answer. In first place the patrons of the well-populated waters let out a righteous howl at seeing their fish hauled away, and the second place the experimenters decided it was a little silly to catch a bunch of full-grown fish and

**Florida's chief
fisheries biologist
gives you
the answer**

transport them for miles just for the privilege of catching them again. So the project was abandoned, and mental wheels began turning again.

Finally someone remembered that fish, like chickens, were hatched from eggs. If the comparison went that far, they decided, why couldn't it be carried even further. Everyone knew when a poultryman's flock dwindled he simply collected more eggs and hatched more chickens. Why, they concluded, couldn't the same principle be applied to fish?

A few experiments disclosed that it could.

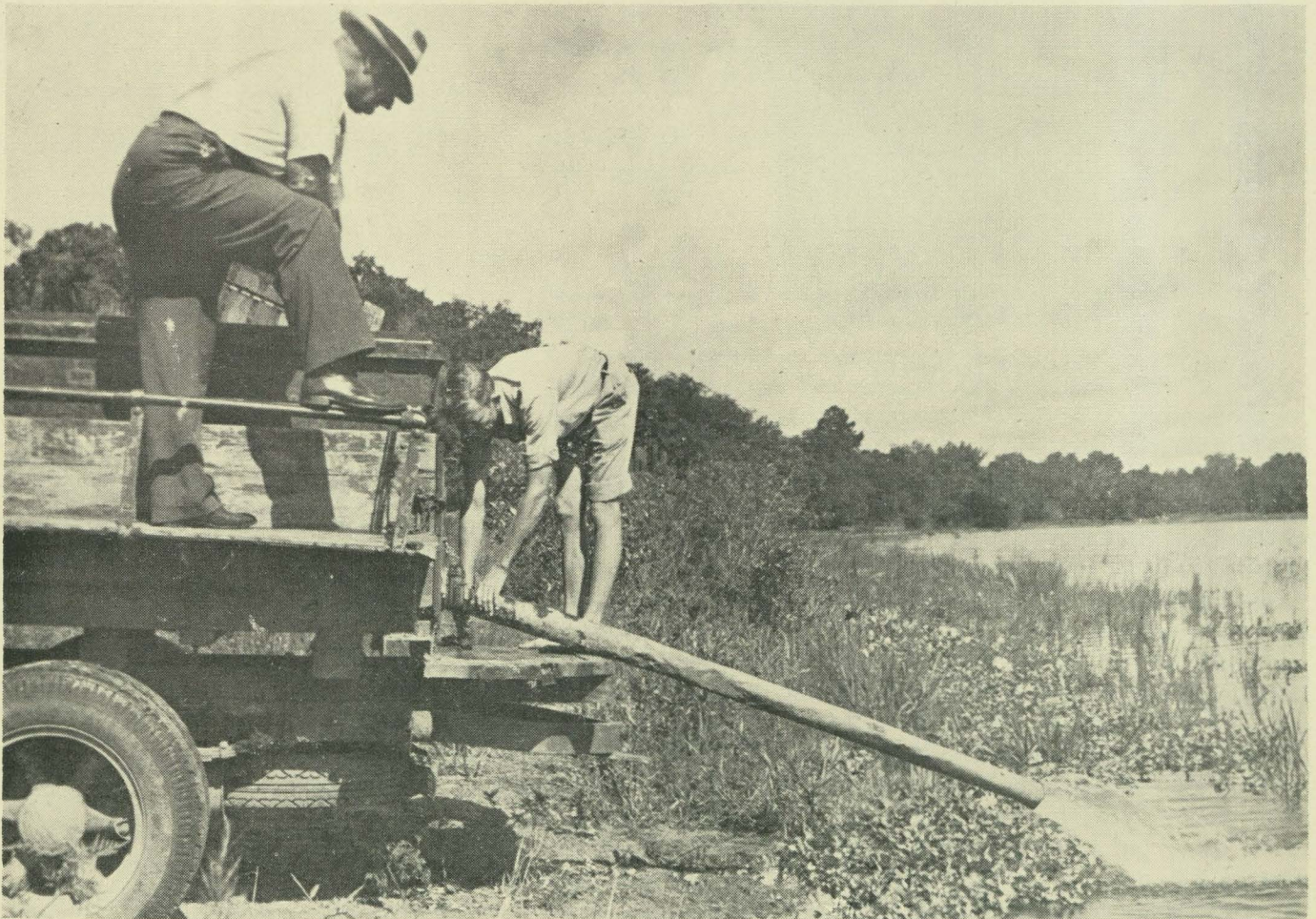
The problem was solved. A few crude fish hatcheries were established, and soon the doughty conservationists were dumping hatchery fry into lakes and streams with happy abandon.

And thus restocking was born.

The idea caught on and grew. Fish commissions were established, largely to administer this amazing new panacea for conservation ills. The commissions in turn set up fish culture stations all over the United States. For years much progress was made; propagation techniques were perfected, and definite restocking programs were instituted. The theory was so logical, sportsmen were convinced it was a conservation "cure-all." Early in the twenties, however, some doubt began to creep into the minds of fisheries biologists and some of the more discerning anglers.

There had been numerous cases where lakes under the jurisdiction of private and public sportsmen's clubs had been continuously stocked with fry, fingerlings and even adult bass and sun fishes, and there was no evidence of better fishing in those waters. It was then that the so-called lake and stream surveys were instigated with the idea of finding whether the waters in question were suitable for the fish which were to be put in them. These surveys proved very valuable in eliminating stocking of waters with species which were definitely not suited to those waters. But they also turned up a great number of instances where the waters were suitable, providing the best possible habitat for spawning, feeding and protection, but where repeated stocking of warm water fishes did not increase the catch one bit. These studies were not concentrated in any one state or section of the country, and some fisheries technicians were finding that other workers were also beginning to doubt the effectiveness of stocking waters that were already sustaining a fair population of warm water game fishes. Through the successes and failures of many experimental projects a few facts have come forth.

FIRST and probably most important, is the fact that a body of water can support only so many pounds of fish, in much the same manner that a pasture will support a certain weight of beef cattle. In other words, we must stop thinking of fish in terms of numbers and



Restocking is still necessary in some bodies of water. But it's far from being the whole answer to fish restoration.

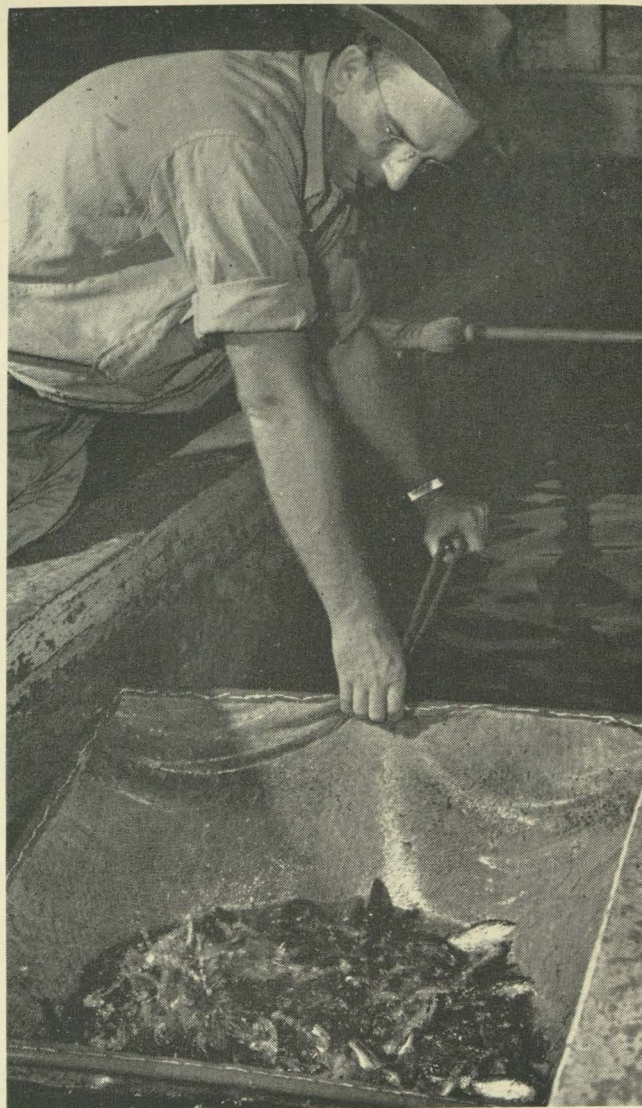
think of them in terms of weight. For example, a pond that would support 1,000 two-pound bass at its carrying capacity could not be made to support or produce better fishing by the addition of another 1,000 fish. Instead, the pond would become overcrowded and the food supply, which formerly supported 2,000 fish, would have to carry 3,000 fish. Imagine what would happen to the cattle on a large ranch, supporting 2,000 cattle in good shape if another 1,000 were added with no steps taken to improve the range or the feeding conditions. The original 2,000 would lose weight, the additional 1,000 could not gain, and sickness, disease and starvation would decimate the excess cattle until there would be less value in those remaining than there had been in the original herd.

It is also fairly well established that our fresh water fishes, being a renewable resource, have the amazing capability to rebuild their populations up to the carrying capacity of the water they inhabit. Nature has taken care of our wild fishes by giving them an enormous reproductive potentiality. For instance, the average successful bass nest produces enough young bass to stock from 50 to 100 acres of water to their carrying capacity, provided no controls were present. Bream will produce similar numbers. Of course, those numbers never reach maturity because if they did, there would simply not be enough water to carry them, nor food to support them.

When a number of fish are taken out of a lake, the remaining population soon gains the weight lost, because the available food supply becomes more plentiful for each individual that remains.

Under present legal fish restrictions our method of taking fish is so inefficient that the sport fisherman can rarely remove over 50% of the fish population from even the smallest lake. The remaining 50% will stop biting on artificial or live bait to such an extent that the fishing will become very poor, and until those remaining fish approach the carrying capacity of that water (in pounds) the fishing will continue to be poor because of the excess food supply which is available while they are rebuilding their weight. This is usually a seasonal matter and, especially here in the southeast, fish populations that have been cut down by angling usually build themselves back to carrying capacity within a year's time.

QUITE often underfishing creates a serious problem in our fish populations. This happens when the more prolific of our warm water fishes, such as bream, get a head start on the larger predatory fishes and so increase their own population that few of them reach a usable size, and fishing becomes poor. This is a much harder situation to correct than overfishing for while in some cases, heavy stocking of the predatory fishes will in time correct this situation, it is usually necessary to devise some method of cutting down on the excess population by removing great numbers of them. In the same manner, the predatory species, such as the bass,

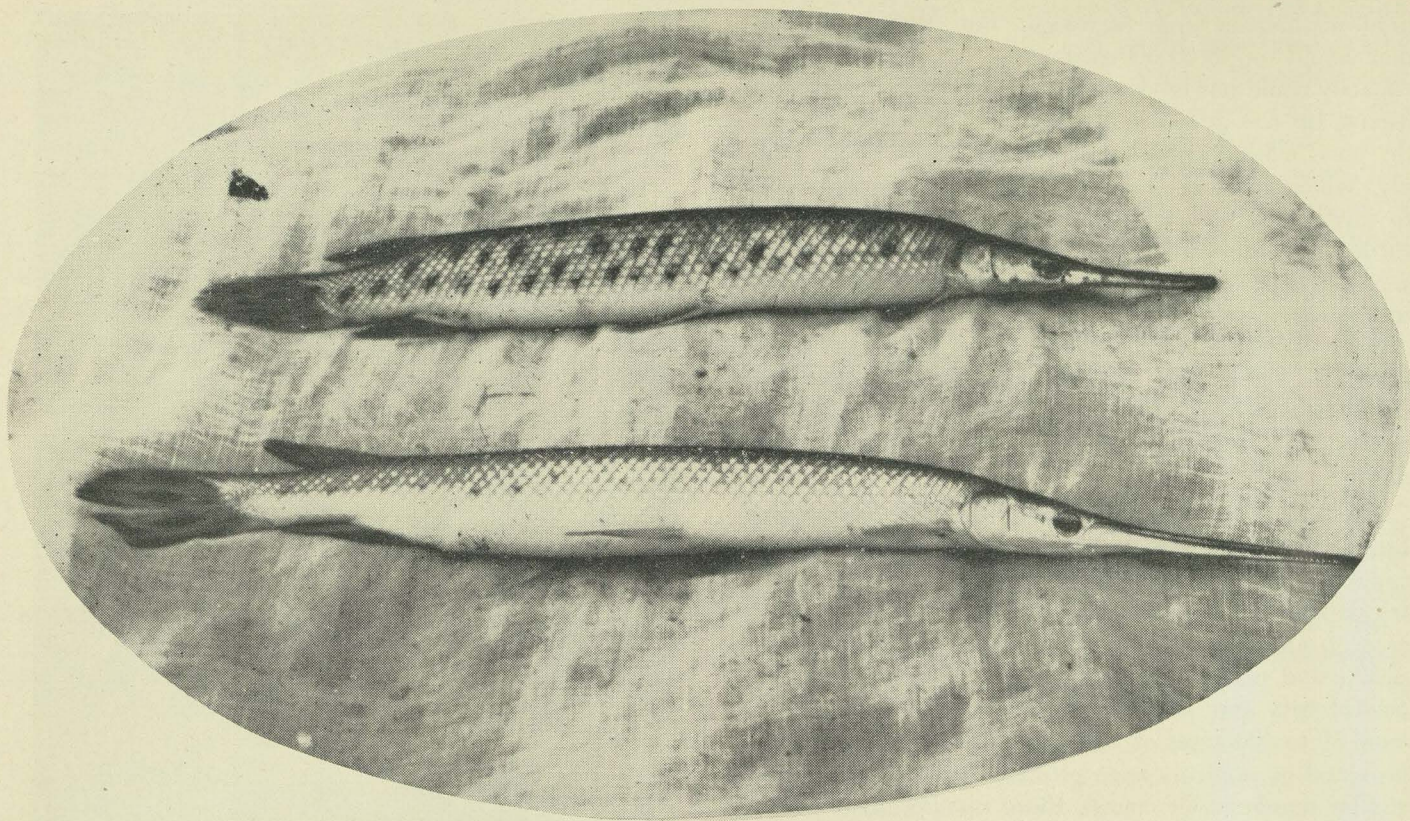


If released in unsurveyed waters, hatchery fingerlings like these are likely to become dessert for some enterprising predator.

often get a head start on the non-predatory species, such as the bream, and as a result keep the population of the latter breed so low that the few that are left reach a good size because of the enormous food supply available to them. Paradoxically the great numbers of bass fail to grow because of the limited food supply available to the individual fish.

Let me give you a specific example of the failure of heavy stocking to produce any worthwhile results. A fair sized stream in one of our southeastern states has been and still is noted for its excellent fishing. This stream had been stocked annually with both large-mouth and small-mouth black bass; tens of thousands of these fish from fry up to 8 and 10 inches long had been liberated; and the work of the Conservation Department for its efforts in this line was lauded. Because of the popularity of this stream, it was decided that we should study it to determine what factors or conditions were responsible for the excellent fishing so that we might try to duplicate them in other streams.

(Continued on Page 13)



Prehistoric Hangover

By CARL LIDDLE

THE GARFISH is a common item in Florida's lakes and streams. Every angler who has ever wet a hook is well acquainted with this vicious, wicked-looking creature that plays such hob with sports fishing. They know him as a repulsive slob, a lazy and unclean mud-dweller and an incorrigible predator. They know that as a food fish he is a dead loss; that as an aquatic attraction he is utterly hopeless, and that as a nemesis of game fish he is discouragingly dangerous. In fact, anyway you look at it the garfish belongs on the debit side of Mother Nature's ledger. He is admittedly one of the most worthless and ill-regarded members of aquatic life. Countless attempts have been made to exterminate him. Yet strangely enough scientists believe this evil-looking monstrosity will soon be celebrating his three-hundred millionth birthday.

Built like a prize-fighter of the deep and armed like a dreadnought, the American garpike started his countless lives so long ago that even scientists have to measure his existence in millions of years.

At the very dawn of the universe—one hundred million years before even the dino-

saur made an appearance—he was answering nature's roll call. The men who figure out such things tell us that in those ancient times, called the "Age of Fishes," there wasn't a living thing above sea level. There was no land and no man to live on it. There was only water and creatures in it. Most of those creatures gradually fell before the enmity of the ages, but not the gar. Today the same long-nosed, scaly individual that swam those prehistoric oceans still sloshes defiantly about our waterways, only a stone's throw from fishing camps, resort hotels, sporting goods stores and other countless wonders of modern civilization.

From out the "Age of Fishes," when big fish ate small fish and small fish ate smaller fish, these relic refugees of a prehistoric family, spear-nosed their way through lakes and bayous and streams to the so-called "Age of Plants." Although the fish were still biting each other and the garpikes were getting their share during meal time, there were no rods and reels, and no big or small game hunters yet.

During the past, life in the sea had been rough enough for the garpikes, what with evading icebergs and bigger and better fish,

but now tremendous things were growing and walking around in the great outside world on the land formations above the seas.

Evidently the "Age of Plants" got tired of being the only kind of life above the sea because monstrous lizard-like reptiles began taking over as lords of a lower world. Now the additional danger of being stepped on by a dinosaur with a foot as heavy as a small house started the garpikes worrying about hazards from overhead and on the land.

Fierce, too, was the fight between the sea and the land, between the power of the waves and the volcanic forces underneath. All the great mountain chains were slumbering beneath the ocean, and so was the State of Florida. The submarine crust of the earth was cooling, and the rocks were folding up as it shriveled, while the molten material within, pressed out through the crevices, overflowed and helped to build up sea-defiant walls, new continents, new lakes, bayous and streams for the garpikes and new troubles in an ever-changing world.

Three times the Andes sank hundreds of

The lowly gar has defied the enmity of the ages to live three hundred million years



Two four-foot gars taken from Florida waters.

feet beneath the ocean level, and again were slowly brought up to their present height, and the continent of North America was nothing but a babe in the woods. Suns of many ages rose and set and a long succession of brute races roamed over the mountains and plains of the earth, and died out ages before the coming of man, along with firearms and fish nets and fish traps.

And through it all the gar thrived happily.

Kinds of Gar

TODAY, this missing link from a prehistoric past, bears such local names as "bill-fish," "needle-fish," "bony-pike," "green-bone," "fish-pike," "spotted-gar," "fresh-water shark," "the savage fish," "short-nose," "long-nose," and "gator-gar."

The European "green-bone" or "long-nose" gas comes from a more fit-to-eat species than the unfit-to-eat American gar-pike. As its names indicate, the European gar has green bones and a long snout and measures about two feet in length. Fishermen often sell it on the London market where folks insist it is a "wholesome dish, in flavor somewhat like a mackerel." Whereas, on this side of the Atlantic, the American garpike has chalked up the saying "as mean as gar-broth."

In the United States, there are three leading species of gar and all three species are found in Florida, with slight variations in color and build.

The short-nosed gar has a short broad snout like the great and powerful alligator

or gator gar and does not exceed three feet in length as a rule. The short-nosed gar is subject to variations in color because of its chameleon-like ability to take on a camouflage of spots and color lines as an added help in concealment among grasses and reeds.

The long-nosed gar, in which the long and slender jaws are much longer than the rest of the head, grows to six or seven feet in length and has been reported to have left its usual fresh water haunts of streams, bayous and lakes, and to have entered the salty sea.

The great and powerful sub-tropical species, reaching 8 to 10 feet in length, is known as the alligator gar. Toughest of all three species, it is also called the "gator-gar" and the "fresh water shark."

The crocodile-like jaws, armed with strong cone-shaped teeth, have been known to strike at almost everything from a minnow to a man's leg. A cylindrical body, clad in an armor of bony scales almost as hard as flint, has been known to resist a spear and even lead shot. As a covering for defense, the mailed head of the garpike might be compared in effectiveness to the shell of a turtle or the armor-like covering of an armadillo. Even a garpike's tail fin is different. It has the upper lobe larger than the lower, with the end somewhat upturned like a shark's tail fin.

Of a sleepy nature, at times, garpikes have floated quietly, basking in the sun under water, while eddies carried them 'round and 'round. Instead of catching prey with one quick grab of the mouth and swallowing it quickly, the gar slips up slyly and sideways, and then seizes the prey suddenly and powerfully. When the "catch" has been jockeyed into a suitable position, the gar swallows it like a lizard or an alligator or a snake. If large enough, the food lump can be seen to bulge out the gar's body slightly as it passes downward.

Vicious and Rugged

IF A GARPIKE were asked: "Where would you like to live best?" it would reply: "Give me a reedy or grassy spot in a stream, a bayou or a lake where schools of small fishes swim by and very few big bass."

The reason garpikes don't like big bass for company in their natural haunt is very simple. It's the old, old story "larger fish eat smaller fish"—and big bass eat small garpikes and big garpikes eat small bass.

For example, take a couple of one-sided situations: If fishermen took out all the large garpikes in a lake and left nothing but large bass and baby garpikes, it wouldn't be long before the large bass went on a straight vegetable diet. However, if some of the baby garpikes were able to evade a large bass long enough to grow bigger and better, the tables would be turned.

In comparison to a full-grown garpike, whose only weak point is a voracious appetite, a bass or any weaker food fish is merely a timid and slow-witted meal, swimming 'round in the water and waiting for the cunning and razor-toothed garpike to catch it off-guard.

Nonetheless one might ask the question: "Well, why haven't the garpikes eaten up all the food fishes during the past 300 million years?"

Well, it seems Mother Nature has ways of handling such problems.

Take, for example, a lake that hasn't been fished in since Hector was a pup, and he's an old dog now. Here Nature has taken a natural course with a natural lake which is simply "swimming full" of many kinds and shapes, sizes and colors of fishes, with baby garpikes and baby bass and full-grown garpike and full-grown bass included in a wide range of other fishes of varying ages.

Of course, in this natural lake, the gar-

(Continued on Page 13)

For years sportsmen have futilely attempted to net the gar into extinction. President Cooksey (second from left) and others

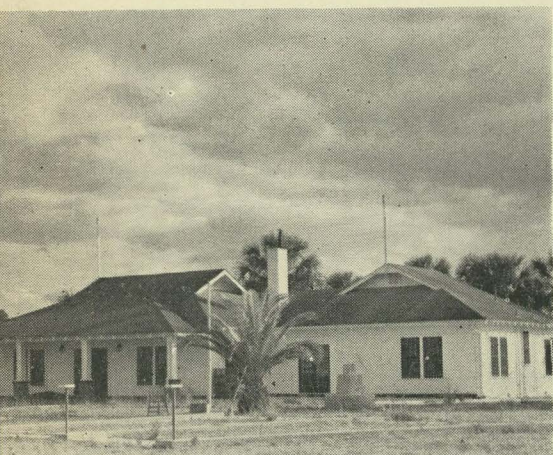


FLORIDA

Conserving, Protecting, Restoring and

WILDLIFE

In the Interest of the Sportsman



Daytona Beach Club's headquarters.

NOVEMBER DATE SET FOR FEDERATION'S ANNUAL MEETING

Plans are shaping up for the largest and most successful convention the Florida Wildlife Federation has ever held.

The date will be Nov. 14-15; the place St. Petersburg. The selection of the convention city was made at the last meeting, held in Orlando. The Sunshine City's Chamber of Commerce and Junior Chamber of Commerce are already dusting off the welcome mat and laying plans for two full days of entertainment, so federation members can look forward to a gala convention.

Federation officials are arranging for some of the state's outstanding speakers to be on hand for the conclave. There'll be important business sessions, too. The federation has years of intensive work ahead of it. At the last annual meeting a long-range program was drawn up for the promotion of better conservation. There were 10 primary objectives listed:

1. Building to a membership of 50,000.
2. Financial program \$100,000, based on ten-year plan.
3. Conservation through education. Using the press, the schools, the library, films, slides, lectures and other such mediums.
4. Greater development through co-operation with Chambers of Commerce, Junior Chambers, Civic, Woman's and other clubs.
5. Protecting, restocking and developing our game, fish and wildlife for permanency.
6. Better enforcement through better trained wildlife police, and closer co-operation with judges, sheriffs, and the legal fraternity.
7. New and better laws, looking to the

Team Work Secret Of Daytona Club's Climb To Success

DAYTONA BEACH—The last few months have been revolutionary ones for the Daytona Beach Wildlife Association. The Club has been given a shot in the arm in the way of family teamwork and the results are overwhelming.

The members, headed by H. T. (Cap) Taylor, President, decided to do something constructive about informing the people how they could help in the conservation program. In an unofficial survey it was found that few persons are cognizant of the facts that our soil has been ruthlessly stripped of its protecting cover and plowed and planted to death; that the streams have been polluted, threatening health and killing fish, birds and plant life; that the forests have been burned and stripped and the wildlife slaughtered. They knew little about the diminishing supply of waterfowl, fish and birds. In plain language, they were ignorant on the subject of nature and how it affects them when the balance becomes upset. Many of these people had never stopped to realize that a country is only as good as its natural resources. They have taken all these things for granted and thought there was enough to last forever. But, when confronted with the facts, they invariably asked, "What can I, one person, do about it?"

That is the important question, and the answer lies in education and teamwork. Since it was decided that this conservation enlightenment should begin in the home with the help of the women, the old stag policy of the club was eliminated. Wives of the members and teen-age boys and girls were invited to the initial family meeting and the attendance was gratifying. At the first meeting films from Marine Studios were shown and after a short business session, hot dogs and cold drinks were served. They liked it! The wives and teen-agers were so enthusiastic and eager to have a part in the activities that the major program of the club is now centered on conservation education for these new guardians of our natural resources.

protection of all natural resources.

8. Perfect co-ordination with state and governmental departments.
9. More game preserves, refugees, and sanctuaries, more fish hatcheries, breeding grounds and protected areas.
10. Making known Florida's advantages as the Nation's No. 1 hunting, fishing and recreational paradise.

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Vice-President.....Guy M. Strayhorn, Ft. Myers
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Club News Wanted

Realizing that clubs are keenly interested in the regular as well as the special activities and features of successful organizations, we ask and urge each and every affiliated club to furnish us with an article or story covering the clubs past, present or planned activities. The report should not cover more than 400 words. One good picture of club building and grounds, membership drive, committee, dinner, or any featured work will be used. First come, first served, so plan now to give us your story, and inform us in advance that such is coming. Stories and news items should be addressed to Federation headquarters in St. Petersburg.



Bear steaks and barbecued beef weren't the famous "pit roasterum," staged by President Ralph. Other appealing "dishes" are shown here passing out more than 50 lovely models who helped serve the lassies passed out nearly 1,000 pounds of barbecued-of-palm salad, and 18 square-feet of genuine south

WILDLIFE FEDERATION

For Men and Lovers of the Outdoors

DISTRICT VICE-PRESIDENTS

District 1	Guy M. Strayhorn, Ft. Myers
District 2	Neal Tyler, Jacksonville
District 3	Wm. F. Jacobs, Tallahassee
District 4	Bill Wellman, West Palm Beach
District 5	Porter Lansing, Sanford

Outdoor Writer Group Feted By Federation

The national spotlight was focused on the Florida Wildlife Federation June 5, when the organization played host to more than 500 members of the Outdoor Writers of America Association, convening in St. Petersburg.

The group, made up of nationally known outdoor scribes from coast to coast, was feted at an all-day "pit roasterum" created especially for the occasion by President Ralph G. Cooksey. The outdoor roasterum, one of the highlights of the week-long convention, featured such culinary attractions as bear, coon and possum meat, plus several hundred pounds of prime Florida beef, all cooked to perfection over an open pit.

Before and after the sumptuous feed, held at the Jaycee Beach Club, the visiting writers were entertained with water-skiing exhibitions by the glamorous Aqua-maids of Cypress Gardens.



appetizing dishes on hand at the Federation's Cooksey for the Outdoor Writers of America. Three food to the visiting writers. They were part of the Federation's 500 guests. During the meal the shapely 15 bushels of black-eyed peas, 40 gallons of heart-healthy cracklin' bread.

Infant Club Thrives In Conservation's 'Red-Hot Corner'

FORT MYERS—Lee county is organized conservation's "red hot corner" in Florida. Citizens hereabouts have never doubted it since the Caloosahatchee Conservation Club sprang into existence early in 1946. The rest of the state found out during the 1947 session of the legislature when a group of determined men, who knew that right was on their side, stood off the counter-attacks of all the fish house dealers in the state to put through a special law that has sounded the death knell of stop-netting and power seining in Lee county inside waters. The fish house lobby spent untold thousands of dollars trying to kill the Conservation Club's local bill—a measure enjoying the support of the senator and both representatives from Lee county. Their efforts failed and the law became a reality—a reality so grim that express office employees have been amazed at the amount of illegal fishing gear being shipped out of Fort Myers.

For the Caloosahatchee Conservation Club and its officers, the victory in Tallahassee was the fulfillment of a dream. It was not only that the remaining saltwater fishery resources of the county would have a chance to come back—for the benefit of the commercial fisherman as well as of the sportsman; it also meant that the time had come when the conservation-minded people of the county could say to the ruthless despoilers of natural resources: "Sorry, Bud, but you've had it."

The Caloosahatchee Conservation Club was born on a balmy January evening at the country court house in Fort Myers. Perhaps it would be dramatic if it could be reported that the infant struggled long and hard for existence and finally made the grade. Such an account would be grossly inaccurate for the club sprang into existence full blown and with a lusty will. Like the mythical John Henry, the child was a "natchul man" and it lost no time in driving iron.

The list of charter members runs in excess of 350. Within a month, there were 500 members and today, only a little more than a year later, there are better than 600 dues-paying members.

By the middle of last year the club was already knee-deep in projects to improve hunting and fishing conditions. Number one priority was given to the special local law to put an end to the types of stop and power netting that were fast putting the smaller commercial fishermen out of busi-



President Cooksey (second from left) prepares meat for roasterum.

ness and completely denuding the inside waters of the county.

In addition to the fish bill, the club also proposed two other measures, one liberalizing the provisions of the law governing the taking of shrimp and another banning gigging or spearing of fish for commercial purposes. These two bills passed, along with the major fish bill.

The club has also succeeded in getting federal government action to analyze and study conditions during the terrible "red tide" epidemic that killed millions of fish during last winter.

It has instituted a fire prevention and forest restoration program that is still in the process of being sold to the landowners of the state.

Success of the Conservation Club's program thus far is attributable in great measure to the patient and adroit leadership exercised by President Ed Smith, Vice-President Elmo Ballard and Executive Secretary W. B. Seabrook. All programs have been carefully publicized both through news items, editorials and paid advertisements. Paid advertising has been found particularly advantageous in time of necessary controversy.

But it has been the basic enthusiasm of the members, their unwavering demand for real conservation before it is too late, that has carried the organization forward. That demand was present before there was a Conservation Club. As long as it is present, men of good will fight for the right of all to participate in the husbandry and enjoyment of our priceless natural resources. There is no combination of greed, selfishness and power that can stand before them.

The hoary marmot of the northern Rockies spends the longest time in hibernation. He is the first to go into hibernation in the fall and the last to come out in the spring in a region where the winters are longest.

They're BITING Here!

OCHLAWAHA RIVER

This crooked river in Putnam and Marion Counties offers fishing with satisfaction and plenty of variety in every stretch and bend. Fair catches are reported daily of large warmouth and speckled perch, bream, stumpknockers, with red-bellies rarely failing to fill the string to the limit. Black bass, especially the large-mouth variety, are biting plentifully; a few catches have been reported by pole, line, hook and worm.

Different lures and bait are showing success. Stubby-head artificial baits, buntycigar or bullet-baits, the narrow spoons with a short strip of bacon-rind, have been taking a few bass. Shiners will bring the limit in a hurry. A six-pound black bass was taken recently at Cedar Landing, Putnam County. Bream are biting well but the average is small in size; the larger ones go for small fresh-water shrimp.

* * *

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Continued good fishing is reported on all rivers and creeks in this vicinity. Blackwater, Yellow and Escambia rivers are in good shape. Bluegills are being caught in the Yellow river. Earthworms are best for pole and line fishing. Hawaiian wigglers show for casting luck.

* * *

DeFUNIAK SPRINGS

In this northwest section of Florida, fish are biting good around Morrison Springs on the Choctawhatchee river, Dead river and Dead Lake. Williams Lake, Dunwoody Lake, Muddy Lake, Sisters' Lakes in East River, Mile Lake and Buzzard Roost, Halfway Lake, Pull-Boat Lake, Magnolia Camp and Bishop Lake. Underwater plugs ring the lucky bell for bass; worms, for shellcrackers; Catawba worms, for bream.

* * *

POLK COUNTY

Although good fishing has slowed up in this area of Florida, Lake Moody, Lake Crooked and Lake Arbuckle are still on the books for good angling. Speckled perch are striking best at river runs; bass are hitting all kinds of favorites in live bait. Fair success is being marked up with a 2000 lure, "bass-bugs," frogs and topwater minnows.

HOLMES CREEK

Bass are biting early in the morning and late in the evening from Cotton Landing, north of Vernon, to the mouth of Holmes Creek which has been a favorite stream for anglers in Holmes and Washington counties and adjacent areas. Both top and underwater plugs are being used. Earthworms and Catawba worms are not being wasted on bream, shellcracker, stumpknocker and warmouth.

* * *

LAKE APOPKA

As a haven for the big bass this beautiful lake in central Florida is still doing its share towards giving up the prize catches. One Florida fisherman cast seven times early one morning and caught five bass, one of which weighed six pounds. A 14-pounder and a 12½-pounder were reported last month when the limit catches were being taken with a 2000 lure and "bass-bugs." The biggest and most recent prize was a 10½-pounder, measuring out 28½ inches with a girth of 18 inches. Feather tipped spoons, top water plugs and the live shiners are bringing good luck.

* * *

APALACHICOLA RIVER

This historically famous river in northwest Florida is a favorite for Georgia anglers and northwest Floridians. Good catches of bream and shellcrackers are being taken with earthworms and Catawba worms in any of the numerous lakes and sloughs from Blountstown to Apalachicola. Bass are striking at river runs; frog-skin plugs are also being used with fair success. Best spots right now are Immonia Lake and "Old Florida River." Any unexpected heavy rains would upset the good fishing.

* * *

MYAKKA STATE PARK

Fairly good fisherman's luck still holds in the river and lakes of this well-known recreation spot in the Sarasota and Manatee counties area. Although a wet spell has slowed down the strikes, anglers who "know their fish" are still bringing in fair-sized strings from the Myakka river and the upper and lower Myakka lakes. Bream and perch bite best to worms; the bass are not hard to please but are giving their best strikes to live bait.

From SPORTSMEN'S CLUBS

THE Orange County Sportsmen's Assn. has started a drive to boost the group's membership to 2,000. **Exec. Sec. H. Stuart Johnston** reports that **Billy Fulford**, membership chairman, is being assisted by five teams for the drive, three in Orlando and two in the county. Prizes of \$35 and \$15 for first and second honors will be given the two teams recruiting the largest number. Members of all drive teams will close the campaign with a stag party. **Director Ben C. Morgan** of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission will be guest speaker at the annual meeting of the association on August 11 in the Sky Room of the Angebilt Hotel.—**Tom Starling.**

The Hendry County Fish and Game Association has marked up a total of 307 members. Of this number LaBelle takes first place with 146 members; Clewiston second, 137 members; and out-of-county, 24 members. **President A. A. Harrington** predicts a membership of 400 by September, with LaBelle and Clewiston competing for the most members.

Officers and directors of the Hillsborough County Wildlife Association recently inspected a Rocky Creek site and a 40-acre tract, north of Memorial Highway, which the group contemplates purchasing for a bass rearing pond. **R. E. Clark**, work unit conservationist for Hillsborough County Soil Conservation District, accompanied the sportsmen and said he looks with favor on the proposed project. **A. W. Craven** is vice president and **W. D. LaMotte** secretary-treasurer of the association.

President Drew Harris of the Volusia Wildlife Assn. reports that the sale of fishing permits for 1946-'47 is more than double the amount sold the previous year, showing an increase from 1,739 in 1945-46 to 3,976 this year. Harris pointed out this increase is due to the activity of game wardens. He praised them for their good work, and emphasized that each time they brought someone into court for fishing without a permit, they jumped up the sale of permits in the county. The breakdown of 1946-47 permits shows 3,030 resident state permits; 129 season non-resident permits; and 817 non-resident 10-day permits. Sale of permits in past years had not always showed an

increase, but had been comparatively steady until this year. They were: 1940-41—637; 1941-42—1,555; 1942-43—1,374; 1943-44—1,405; 1944-45—1,718.

The Manatee County Sportsmen's Club, Bradenton, which was organized about three months ago, has approximately 100 members already. **Walter S. Hardin**, state representative, is president; **Frank West**, vice president; **H. W. Willis**, secretary-treasurer. Affiliated with the Florida Wildlife Federation, the group is planning on much activity, and will strive especially to protect inland salt water fishing and improve and publicize this sport.

More News

What's doing in your organization? FLORIDA WILDLIFE needs more news from sportsmen's clubs.

This is your page; help make it a success. Send us notes on club elections, projects, growth and general and social activities. There are over 60 sportsmen's organizations in Florida boasting a total of more than 15,000 members. Let them know how you're progressing.

The deadline for club news is the fifteenth of each month. It should be addressed to the Editor, FLORIDA WILDLIFE, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, Tallahassee, Fla.—*Editor.*

The Sarasota Fish and Game Association, with approximately 40 members, is planning to enlarge their membership and improve conditions both in salt and fresh water fishing in that section. **James M. Younkman** is president, with **Hollis P. Bacon** serving as secretary-treasurer.

Tosohatchee Game Preserve, Inc., Orlando, is a limited membership club with their own hunting preserve. Officers are **William M. Beardall**, president; **C. S. Lee**, vice president; **O. Beverly McEwan**, secretary; and **M. O. Overstreet**, treasurer. The club recently affiliated with the Florida Wildlife Federation. The Federation now has a total of 36 clubs, and is working on the organization of more clubs and the enlargement of membership of all clubs.

Daytona Beach Wildlife Association is co-sponsor with the chamber of commerce of the \$12,000 fishing tournament which has stimulated an increased interest in fresh water fishing. A handsome tournament book, printed on slick paper and with colored pictures, came off the press recently. It is a beautiful and informative souvenir. In cooperation with the East Volusia Sportsmen's Club, New Smyrna Beach, the local club is planning a big fish fry in September, at which time clubs from neighboring towns will be invited. Close harmony has prevailed between the Volusia County club this year and they meet together whenever possible.—**Sarah Alberson.**

Commission Cracks Down On Sale of Fresh Water Fish

With two favorable court decisions to back it up the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has served notice that it is once more clamping down on the netting sale of game fish from Lake Okeechobee and the St. Johns river.

On July 28 Commission Director Ben C. Morgan advised fish dealers throughout the state they had 48 hours to dispose of their stocks of fresh water scale fish.

Simultaneously he issued instructions to all wildlife officers to arrest and prosecute any person found with over the legal bag of bream, crappie or perch after July 30. Officers were also instructed to seize and confiscate any illegally taken fish or any commercial fishing equipment found in fresh water bodies after that date.

"The seining and sale of fresh water game fish in Florida must be stopped," Morgan declared, in a statement issued to the press. "Two circuit judges have ruled that the practice is illegal, and that the commission has a right to prevent it. And that's exactly what we intend to do, unless a higher court rules otherwise."

Commission regulations have long prohibited the commercial handling of all fresh water species except cat-fish, mud-fish and gar. However, a series of bills passed by the 1947 legislature made these regulations inapplicable to Okeechobee and the St. Johns and gave jurisdiction of the two inland bodies to the State Board of Conservation, a salt water agency.

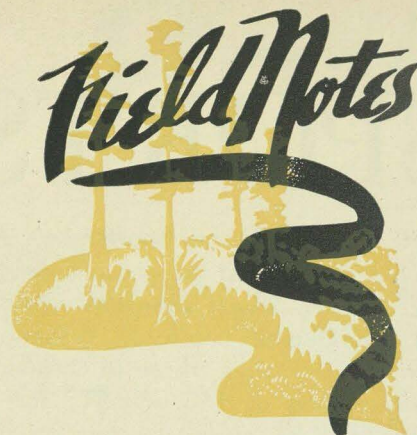
All of these acts have now been held unconstitutional by the courts. Late last month Circuit Judge Hugh M. Taylor of Quincy upheld the commission's right to control fishing in Lake Okeechobee and the St. Johns river. Judge Taylor ruled the three new legislative acts which placed the water under the conservation department were in conflict with commission regulations, and, therefore, invalid under the constitution.

Earlier, a fourth bill repealing penalties for violations of commission rules on the two bodies was ruled unconstitutional by Judge W. T. Harrison of Palmetto.

As this issue goes to press, wildlife officers report that retail fish dealers throughout the state are complying with the commission edict. The day the new ban went into effect only one barrel of fish was reported confiscated.

Indications also were that fish "bootleggers" who market local bream and crappie in Georgia may be in for a jolt. Just before it recessed, Congress passed a bill making it a federal offense to transport illegally taken game fish across a state line. The bill is now awaiting the president's signature.

If the measure becomes a law, commission officials believe it will do much to prevent the undercover traffic in game fish. Georgia, one of the few states that permits the sale of fresh water scale fish, has long been one of the biggest markets for Florida caught bream and crappie.



Big game was on the loose recently in Pasco County, near Aripeka. W. M. S. Surals of Aripeka bagged a 179-pound black bear with two shots from a .22 high-power rifle.

Wildlife Officer G. L. Abbott of Brooksville, Herando County, chalks up the details of this big game hunt in Florida which started unexpectedly enough during a quiet automobile drive.

Abbott says that he and a grandson, Bobby Boyd, were driving on the highway about 4:30 in the afternoon, one and a half miles from Aripeka. Looking ahead several hundred yards, they were sure they saw a hog walking across the road. But they weren't sure enough. When they slowed down a hundred yards from the alleged "porker," lo and behold, it turned out in all reality to be black bear.

Abbott and his grandson drove on to Aripeka, where they found Surals and several others. They packed in Buck Hopes' dogs, returned to the swamp, and the hunt was on. The bear was killed after an hour's chase.

Wildlife Officer Thomas Stanaland of Wimua, Hillsborough County, reports that fishing wasn't so good in his district during July due to heavy rains. The rains, however, have been a lifesaver for a good many fish. This district suffered a severe dry spell in April and May.

Bigger and heavier black bears were also doing "big game stunts" the past week in Jefferson County. Bidwell Murphy of Perry killed a 250-pound black bear in Wacissa Titi Swamps, and gave the prize his last ride to town on the front fender of the car.

Wildlife Officer Ernest Douglas of Alma during the past month saw his first young quail in Jefferson County.

Douglas reports that heavy rains have endangered lives of young quail and turkey, since there's more water in the woods in his locality this year than he's seen in several years. He has noticed large numbers of quail in pairs without any young, and, when he sees young birds, there are only two or three with the old quail or hen turkey.

Enforcement Chief Dies In Punta Gorda

D. Frank Smoak, Sr., chief law enforcement officer for the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, died at his home in Punta Gorda Sunday (Aug. 3) after a long illness.

Smoak, 59 years old, who headed the commission's 180-man enforcement staff, had been a wildlife officer for more than 15 years. He was chief officer for the First District for six years before his appointment to the new post last spring.

A native of Savannah, Ga., the veteran wildlife officer moved to Punta Gorda in 1924.

Smoak served four terms as mayor of the South Florida city and had also acted as city manager. He was 1947 president of the local Kiwanis club, but resigned recently because of ill health.

In Tallahassee, Commission Director Ben C. Morgan said no successor had been chosen for the statewide post.



"Old Mac sometimes gets a little mixed up on his quail."

All herons fly with their necks drawn in, and their feet extended.

RESTOCKING

(Continued from Page 5)

The first step was the instigation of a census of the fish that were being caught. A trained worker spent months checking fishermen's bags and sampling the fish population at different points in the stream. On the conclusion of his work, it was quite startling to find that almost 80% of the bass caught from that stream were neither large-mouth or small-mouth bass, but a third species of bass known as the Kentucky or spotted bass. This bass is difficult for the average fisherman to distinguish, as it resembles very closely both the other basses. In short, the fishermen were congratulating the Conservation Department on producing a good catch of fish, when actually the department had never released the first one of that species. The spotted bass, being a native to that stream, was producing the good fishing while the tens of thousands of large-mouth and small-mouth bass which had been released over a period of many years were not showing up. Stocking of this stream was discontinued but catch records were kept, and for several years thereafter the fishing remained as good as it had been with almost the same percentage of the catch being made up as it was during the time of the heavy stocking.

THERE are many other examples that I could quote showing places where it had been proven that stocking with hatchery raised fish either had no effect on the fishing or had a harmful effect. *There is not one instance*

PREHISTORIC HANGOVER

(Continued from Page 7)

piques have been feeding on the smaller and weaker fish, but all the other fish have been doing the same thing because all fish are predatory. Therefore the net results is a normal and natural balance.

Can Live Anywhere

ASK a garpike: "What's the lowest depths of life into which you could fall, and still pull through without losing your life?"

And the garpike could reply truthfully: "In an emergency, I can make out in a mud hole, a ditch of water, live completely out of water for several hours, and swim through the filthiest of polluted streams."

In addition to being built like an armored baby submarine with a spear full of fangs, this fabulous "missing link" has a rudimentary lung which he can use during an emergency of get his breath or die for the want of air. Showing a preference for the very best of water and the very best of food fishes, nonetheless this diabolical marauder has been seen rising for breath in streams of industrial waste, little better than an open sewer, and eating refuse that was little better than rotten garbage.

Even if a garpike did die from an accident, a losing food-fight with another fish, or from last sickness and old age, he has more than 15,000 chances to one of survival



of his species which is one of the foremost reasons why he has pulled his kind down through the ages so successfully.

For instance, one female garpike can lay enough eggs to fill the rear seat of an automobile. A 24-inch female contained 10,705 eggs, while another female, weighing 6 pounds, 8 ounces, packed in 15,540 eggs, to say nothing of what a full-sized female alligator gar, in the prime of life, could do in the count-off of eggs for off-

to prove that the addition of hatchery fish to *large bodies of water* has aided or bettered fishing conditions where the desired warm water species were already established.

"Now wait a minute, here!" you might say. "What does this fellow want us to do? Scrap all of our fish hatcheries? Do away with all artificial propagation?"

Not at all. Fish hatcheries still play and will continue to play a large part in our fish management work. For one thing, there are always new bodies of water being impounded and new farm ponds being dug, which will need a supply of fish of the desired species. Then, occasionally, come droughts, temporary pollution and other factors that may make waters uninhabitable by fish for short periods of time, but which will need restocking when conditions in these waters are again favorable. And, too, in the case of small ponds or small lakes which are not too far out of balance, it is possible to bring them back by heavy stocking of the type fishes which are lacking. Also, when it becomes desirable to remove the unwanted predators from a body of water in great numbers, it is often advisable to follow up that action with a stocking of desirable predators in order that the non-predatory species do not increase so rapidly as to become overpopulous.

What I do say, though, is that the hatchery program should be just *one* of the practices used in managing our fresh water fisheries. In spite of the opinion of many well-meaning conservationists restocking is definitely not the wholesale remedy for our fishing ills.

spring to carry on the ancient tradition of the garpike family.

A tough and rank flesh, which tastes like something a cat dragged in, deters many people from eating gar meat or even getting within smelling distance of gar broth.

However, the Seminole Indians of Florida consider gar among their favorite foods. They cook the whole fish over hot coals, and eat the flesh right out of the shell, or take off the scaly-shell and cut up the flesh for a chowder dish or for flavoring water into gar broth.

Long before the coming of the Seminole Indians, however, early American Indians believed that the gar was possessed with one of the most formidable of all demons, and they would not eat its flesh for fear of swallowing a devilish spirit. The gar-pikes were among the original fathers of evil witchcraft and revengeful demons. The spirit of a dead enemy might also be hiding in this bewitched creature, and cause the death of an Indian in case he ate the flesh. Therefore, the flesh of the garpike was taboo.

With such centuries of hate piled up against him it seems incredible that the gar has managed to survive. But survive he has. And even now—in an era of guns, nets, traps, and human ingenuity—this prehistoric hangover from an ancient age continues to thrive, and bedevil fish and fisherman alike.



J. I. Dennis (left) and Ralph Dennis with a string of black bass taken from the backwaters of the Withlacoochee River, nine miles from Dunnellon. The big-mouth beauties were hooked with live bait.

TEN FOR TWO

Normally hunting law violators don't go in for game restocking, but two out-of-season nimrods from Gulf Hammock did—\$900 worth.

When Levy County Judge H. S. Wilson found R. V. Smith and Henry Markham guilty of killing two fawns during closed season he gave them the choice of going to jail or buying 10 deer to replace the two they had killed. They agreed to buy the deer.

The white-tails, to be purchased through the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission and released in Levy County, will cost Markham and Smith \$90 a head.

The two men, arrested by Wildlife Officer James J. Clary of Morristown, were also charged with hunting in a closed area at night with a gun and light.

PHILLIPS RESIGNS

Clayton R. Phillips, auditor for the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission for the past twelve years, has resigned to take over the duties of auditor and office manager of the motor vehicle responsibility division of the State Insurance Department.

Phillips has served the Commission since July 1, 1935. Prior to that time, he had been connected with the Eustis Motor Company and several banking institutions in Florida. He is a member of the Tallahassee Kiwanis Club.

The motor vehicle responsibility division of the State Insurance Department was created by the 1947 legislature.



Books



OUTDOORS UNLIMITED — Edited by J. Hammond Brown. 343 xiv pages. Illustrated with 59 unique, original sketches by 10 of the celebrated outdoor artists. Sponsored by the Outdoor Writers Association of America. Published by A. S. Barnes and Company, Inc., New York, 1947. Price \$3.50.

This elegantly published and attractively bound anthology contains an extraordinary collection of fascinating and delightful stories redolent of all good things in the clean outdoors. Here is the "cream of the crop" of choice stories on fishing, hunting, and wilderness experiences selected by the editors of the country's leading outdoor magazines. The volume contains 47 contributions by 37 famous writers and each story is captioned with an appropriate drawing. The list of authors and artists is a galaxy of stars, acknowledged leaders in the fields of outdoor writing and illustration.

Few sportsmen are able to get their fill of outdoor recreation and this volume is the next best thing to a trip afield. The book is packed with hours of real enjoyment. Hunting and fishing predominates but every phase of participating field sport is featured. Every story in *Outdoors Unlimited* and each illustration, is by a member of O. W. A. A. J. Hammond Brown, one of the patriarchs of the writing fraternity, President and Executive Director of the Outdoor Writers Association of America made a valuable contribution to conservation literature in the compiling and editing of this handsome edition.

HOW TO STAGE WATER CARNIVALS AND BOAT REGATTAS — A brochure on the ins and outs of staging a water carnival. Published by the Outboard Boating Club of America, 307 North Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Ill. A 30-page magazine-size book, attractively bound. Mailed free to boat club officials and committeemen interested in promoting colorful aquatic entertainment.

For a book which can be obtained without cost, the how to do volume on regattas is a wonder of this year. The entire field of water carnivals and regattas is covered from starting preparations, financing, handling contestants, selecting trophies, safety and insurance. The book even explains how to build a timing device if one is not obtainable.

There are 24 chapters, covering the subject completely. No yacht club or boat club should be without this book.

★
BAIT CASTING WITH A THERMOMETER—A book on how to read the thermometer and know when to fish. Written by Frank R. Steel, published by Paul, Richmond & Co., 227 West Washington St., Chicago 6, Ill. Price \$1.50. Sold in sports goods stores.

This book explains in detail, how by knowing the surface water temperature, you can be certain where the fish are spending their time. This knowledge at least allows the fishermen to put the bait in front of the fish, if any. Casting techniques are well described and diagrammed.

Commission Appoints Additional Biologists

Two new biologists have been added to the staff of the Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

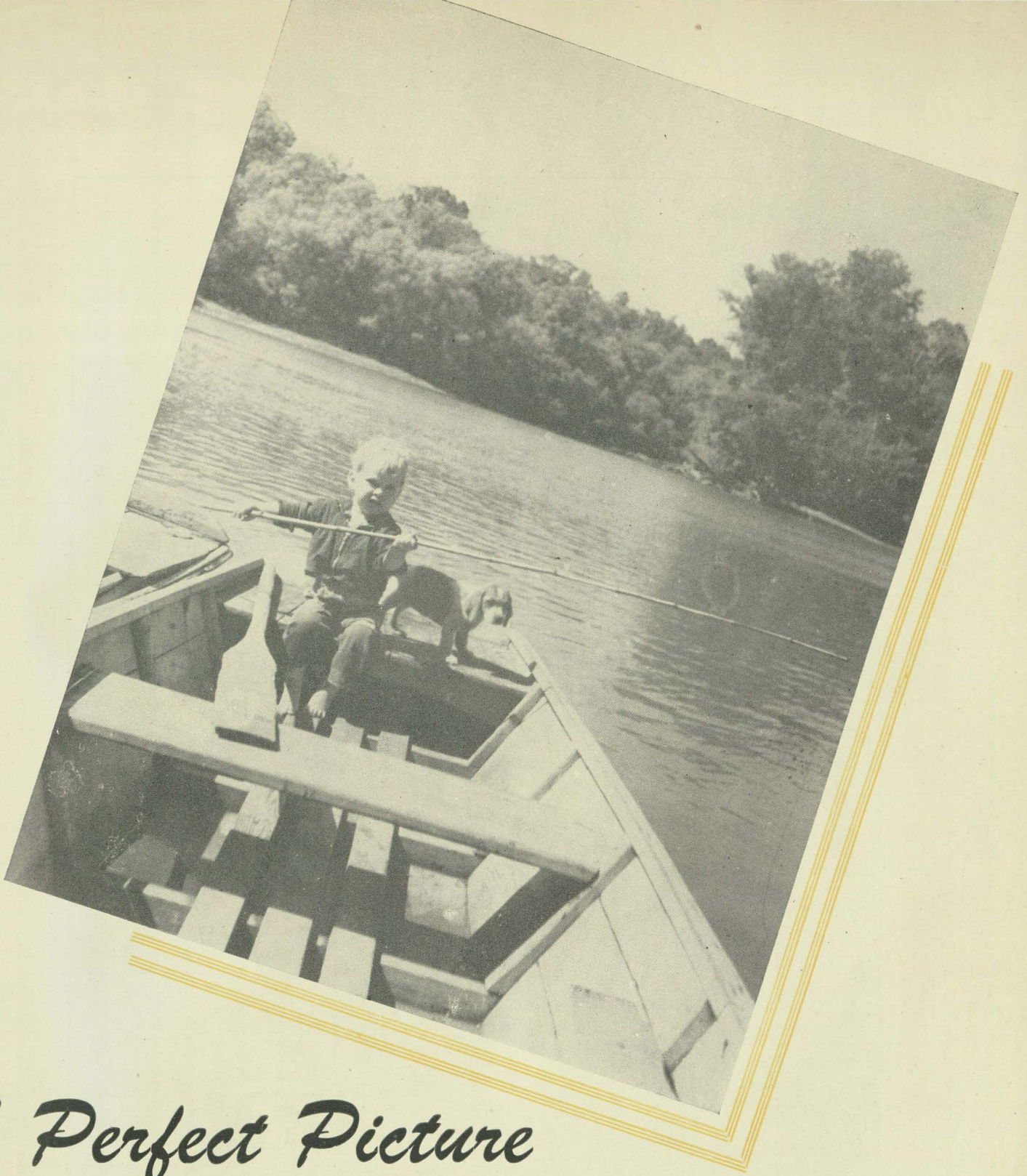
Robert W. Murray, former Missouri wildlife biologist, has been named to make a quail management survey throughout the state. His project calls for a survey of quail stock and research on habits and habitat of the bob white. His headquarters is located at Chipley.

A graduate of the University of Missouri, Murray has had a varied and wide experi-

ence as wildlife biologist for conservations commissions in Missouri and Georgia.

Lynn H. Hutchens, a fisheries biologist formerly connected with the Illinois Natural History Survey, has been appointed to make a survey of fishing conditions on the St. Johns River.

Prior to coming to Florida, Hutchens was in charge of river survey work for the Illinois agency. Before the war, he was employed by the Cook County Forest Preserve District, near Chicago, as biologist and field naturalist. He will make headquarters at Welaka.



A Perfect Picture

OF A PERFECT DAY FOR ANY FELLER AND HIS DOG

Just a cane pole, a bent pin, a warm cloak of sunshine and a few hungry fish—that's all he needs to catch the thrill of the outdoors. It is a perfect scene of young America down through the years—a nostalgic portrait that brings back the memory of a thrill never quite lost.

Unfortunately though, there is another picture that goes with the story. It is an ugly, distorted picture of waste, greed and exploitation; it is a picture of slaughtered game and ravaged waters; it is a picture that can only be erased by the hand of *conservation*.

**THE OUTDOOR FUTURE OF OUR YOUTH DEPENDS UPON CONSERVATION!
DO YOUR PART TO HELP THE GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION
CONSERVE • PROTECT • RESTORE FLORIDA'S GAME AND FISH**



Courtesy New York Herald-Tribune

*Why not put everything we don't want
in the river*